THE VINDICATION OF AN Injured Lady.

Written by the Lady

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One of the LADIES of the Privy Chamber
To the QUEEN-MOTHER of *England*.

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Though I ſhall never take delight in being reckoned amongſt the *Gaſte papiers* or Scriblers of this Age, yet I am at this time enforced by a more then ordinary neceſſity for the defence of my innocency, to make uſe of a known Right, that Cuſtome, the practice of time, hath allowed, even from the date of Learning, which is by a modeſt Anſwer in writing, to confute the calumnies and petulant reproaches of envious Adverſaries; *Ad exempla igitur recurramus, & majorum vobis aſſerimus Conſuetudinem.* Upon which ground I ſhall proceed to my Vindication, by the Readers favour, without any apprehenſion of fear to be taxed with a proud or ſelf conceited ſingularity, hoping it will not be accounted a reaſonleſs imitation in me, if I follow the example of many prudent and vertuous Ladies, in a moderate defence void of paſſion and uncharitableneſs, and that my Adverſaries are not ſo incorrigible, but that they may be amended with the lenitives of ſober language, without the help of more operative Remedies; for having once cleared my ſelf to the world, I ſhall not ſo much ſeek their puniſhment, as reformation, and ſhall take leſs pleaſure in ſtriking them with a rod of Palms, then in affording them undeſerved gentleneſs; for I ſhall alwayes approve of that noble *Italian*'s judgement, who ſaith, *La forza di chi vince è Coſa human -ma la clemenza di chi pardona è Coſa divina.* Though my Adverſaries be of the ſharpeſt and moſt clamorous ſex, and are like the Placentine Advocates, *Qui adeo (ut dicitur) ſubtili pollent ingenio, ut judicibus ipſis facile tenebras offundant*, I would paſs them by with that regardleſs neglect which uſually ſtifles their contumely, were not the too facil

dulity of ſome heavy-headed perſons, who are apt prodigally to throw away their belief on weak ſuggeſtions, greater then their ſubtilty; but it being in this reſpect a neceſſary duty, and for that no duty is more ſtringent to a perſon of innocency and generous ſentiments, then the defence of reputation; for, *Qui famam negligit, dicitur crudelis* ſaith the Canoniſt. And St. *Paul* the Apoſtle ſaith, *Expedit mihi magis mori, quàm ut gloriam meam quis evacuet.* For theſe reaſons premiſed, I am reſolved to clear my ſelf beyond their oppoſition, and the doubts of all others in the world, to ſuch as in the peruſal hereof will make uſe of their judgement and reaſon, and in my progreſs I ſhall not let looſe the reins of reaſon at paſſions importunity, though I am provoked above imagination by thoſe women, to reſent their injuries done unto me at the higheſt rate, which are greater then any others I finde within the Regiſtry of my obſervation, remembrance or reading, to have been placed on a Lady of quality, by any perſons of worthy ſtate or condition, and therefore might have almoſt legitimated impatience.

But to make my entrance into this undertaking the more perſpicuous, I ſhall premiſe, as a proper *adalutedo*, a few conſiderations, worthy, as I humbly conceive, to be taken notice of.

Firſt, I have not heard that any one man whoſoever, nor any woman that is acquainted with me, hath ſpoken any one word to my prejudice.

Secondly, Thoſe women who have opened their black mouths, or ſhewed their bad teeth againſt me, are onely thoſe few who are noted for their meeting oftentimes at certain places to none of the beſt purpoſes, as I conceive, and ſuch as either would hold up the repute of their leſſined vertues, or decayed beauties, by crying them down in others, as if they could reſtore irreparables in themſelves,

ſelves; by endeavouring to deprive others of them.

Thirdly, As they do not pretend to have ſo much acquaintance with me, as thereby to obſerve any thing of my deportment, to juſtifie the character they have given of me, ſo have they not to this day named any one perſon to be their informer againſt me.

Fourthly, Of the many things uttered by them to my diſgrace, there is not any one, ſo much as in one inſtance of example verified.

Fifthly, Thoſe women who know me not, like Sorcerers, who caſt a miſt upon the brighteſt morning, darkly and falſly inſinuate againſt me in doubtful terms, thoſe things which they dare not expreſs or declare againſt me; for, *Sub aquivocationibus latens Calumnia, latit tutiſſime.*

Sixthly, There is nothing that they have uttered againſt me in the particulars hereafter mentioned, but have and will be refuted by the irrefragable teſtimony of thoſe perſons of credit who know me, and will ſpeak plainly without the allay of intereſt, and with great reaſon in my vindication, uſing no other arguments then ſuch as are drawn from the chief inducements of belief.

Seventhly, Thoſe Ladies are not ſo learned, nor ſo wiſe, nor ſo noted for ſpeaking truth, as that their aſſertions can pretend to the dignity of Axioms.

Eighthly, No Magiſtrate or Perſon of Honour hath given any ſhadow of juſtification, or afforded the leaſt colour of allowance to their proceedings againſt me, but on the contrary have wondered thereat, not without diſtaſt and deteſtation.

Theſe Obſervations premiſed, I am now ready to encounter my furious Adverſaries in the very front of oppoſition, with purpoſe to refell every of their conſiderable Objections, where

whereof, if any shall happen to be unanswered, I desire it may be attributed rather to the weakness of my memory, then their strength. As for some of their lesser Objections, I shall omit to mention them here, either out of compassion to their simplicity, or of contempt of their weakness.

These Ladies, in the first place, with intent to justifie the rest of their succeeding injuries, and to give credit to what ill reports may easily be believed on that account, have publickly reported me to be a Stage-player, but without any colour of proof. I have read, that when no proof is offered of an Objection, then a simple Denial is Solution enough. Yet for Answer hereunto, I say, that were I a Stage-player, or so great a Player at Dice, as some of those Ladies are, or an entertainer of such as use that game, I could not wonder that they should be thereby animated with hopes of impunity, to endeavour prejudice to my reputation by never so notorious falshoods; for I have observed within the view I have taken of the Civil Law (whereunto, as also unto the most eminent Professors thereof, and particularly to one above the rest, I do and shall alwayes bear a great respect) that *Aleatorum susceptoribus injuria damnumque datur impune*. But forasmuch as I am not so Theatrical as some of those Ladies are, who frequently spend the time in the Playhouse, which the affairs of their household, or the exercise of Devotion might have more reasonably and more profitably imployed elsewhere, and that they fail in the very art of injuring me lawfully, nor did I ever in my life tread on a Stage, nor was I ever acquainted with, or allied to any Stage-players, or so much as a Gossip to any of them, nor am I by Law, Quality or disposition of mind liable to sustain injuries without due resentments in my self, or the endeavour of having due punishment inflicted upon the Authours of them. I shall give these Ladies to understand, that though I have hitherto

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proceeded as leiſurely, as the Knights of the Band are to walk by the Rules of their Order, that juſtice to be adminiſtred ſhortly againſt them, as reporters of falſe news, will free me from this their lying imputation, and make them ſuſpected in what they ſhall report hereafter againſt me. This I ſhall be forc't unto in due time, for to ſpare them too long in a caſe of this nature, would be a criminal indulgence, and a ſhrinking from the due maintenance of my Honour, which I am bound to uphold. In the mean time I ſhall leave it to the ſilent admiration of all ſober perſons, how that any fancy could be ſo wilde, as to think the world can be perſwaded to believe, that a perſon of a generous Education and Condition, ſhould turn a Stage-player, they ſhould, to have made their ſtories more currant, have imitated *Heliodorus*, who though a fabulous Writer, as *Bochartus* ſaith of him, *Conatur tamen ſcribere vere quam ſimillima.* They ſhould firſt of all have perſwaded the world, that I was not deſcended from, nor allied to the moſt Honourable and Illuſtrious Family *de la Torre* in *Venice*, and to the Noble Families of *Genoua*, where my Mother yet lives in an opulent Condition, being the Wife of one of the States of *Genoua*, or that I had leſs to my Portion then three or four thouſand pounds, which ſumme I brought in Marriage to my Husband, who is the Son of an ancient Noble man, and none of the lateſt Earls of this Kingdom, or that we were deſtitute of means to ſupport our Quality and Degree, all which if they had done, they might have had more hopes to be believed; But ſome gueſs, their purpoſes were to gratifie the Genius of this City of *Dublin* with ſome report of News, though never ſo foreign from Truth, as thinking perhaps it was, as *Guildas* ſayes of *England* in his time, *Semper aliquid audire volens.* Laſtly, ſome of thoſe who have been too buſie in inventing or reciting this calumny, have at laſt ſo much ingenuity to acknowledg, that I

am not guilty thereof. This Calumny therefore which was laid on me, as an argument to induce the belief of other untruths, having lost its force by a total evacuation, I shall endeavour to shatter the whole superstructure, with confidence, that my Reader will allow reason in matters of this nature to be the Grand Patron of belief, and that the lowdness of an ungrounded clamour ought not to prevail against the calm reason of a modest answer.

Object. 2. In the next place it is objected against me by those Ladies, That a certain Learned Person is civilly treated by me when he comes to visit me.

Answ. For Answer hereunto, I say, That the malice of those Ladies (for so they would all be called) is as friendly to me in effect, as it was mischievous in their intentions, insomuch, that their detraction seems as it were suborn'd to commend their enemy; for it hereby rather proves me civil, then convinces either of us guilty of sin. But, if in their way of reasoning, they will infer from the admittance of civil Visits an inclination to, or guiltiness of immodesty, I must needs say, that according to my Logick, which is as artificial as theirs, it is a too violent and forc'd consequence, unless they will confess, that the much more frequent visits which they receive daily from younger Gentlemen, and of less strict behaviour, may render themselves justly suspected of what they would seem to charge me with. Again, I appeal to several of the said Ladies, whether the same Gentleman hath not been admitted to as private familiarities, and frequent converse with them as ever he had with me. In the next place, I shall refer the Consideration hereof to the whole City and Kingdom, where he hath shined from his infancy hitherto, as an Illustrious Example of refined morality, and an extraordinary gravity, which hath rendred his Company always acceptable to the gravest and most vertuous of both Sexes,

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whersoever he resided. And wherefore I should be accounted an Heteroclite in moralitie, by conforming to the rule and example of the Best, I shall leave to the admiration of all judicious persons, whose ears are not stufft with obstructive prejudice, who will easily pronounce, that this argument is as light as the breath that framed it. Much more may be saidin Answer hereunto, but having said so much already, I shall resolve against needless amplifications, which are but testimonies of ostentation, or at the most but expletives to fill up the place of arguments. I shall onely add this Consideration, That these Ladies seal their own doings with the Signature of approbation, and brand mine with a mark of dislike, whilst we do the very same things, which I cannot conceive to be agreeable to the rules of decency, of civil deportment, or of justice: for though they be stiled a Convention, they have not authority sufficient to bring their judgement into credit against this transcendant rule of Nature, *Quod tibi fieri non vis, alteri ne feceris*; for their jurisdiction being but a usurpation, it is as incompetent as their debates have been impertinent. Finally, where the judgement of a Court is covered with the veil of a black hood, it is no wonder if the Sentence be erroneous.

The next Objection against me, is, That I have practised witchcraft to gain some ends on the Person above-mentioned. I should look upon this Objection as a matter of infinite amazement, were I not assured that it proceeded onely from the fancy of them, who use to be afflicted with their own dreams, as taking them for divine advertisements, and who are daily troubled with *Chimera's*, like those of the *Allumbradoes* of *Spain*, which have no beeing but in the monstrous composition of wilde and distempered brains, infected with a diabolical malice and envy, which by singularity of denomination, is called the Sin of the Devil.

It is my happineſs, and I heartily render thanks to God for it, all ears that have heard this report are not ſo credulous, as the tongues of that buiſie Siſterhood are licentious; yet I ſhall nevertheleſs ſay ſomething in anſwer to this Objection, whereby it will appear, that I am rather *miſeranda*, to be pitied, for being cauſleſly loaded with prophane calumny, then *erubeſcenda*, to be put to ſhame, for any thing of guilt they can truly charge upon me of this kinde. And let the world firſt judge, according to its common apprehenſion of things, whether moſt of my Adverſaries have not more likely features in their faces of ſuch infernal intelligencers, and more Signatures of wrinkled Old Age, the moſt uſual characteriſticks of Witches, then any they can diſcern in me, who have not yet compleated the 24th. year of my Age. This premiſed to the conſideration of the world, I ſhall now write a word or two by way of Introduction to the underſtanding of the nature of Magick and Witchcraft, though I ſhall not pretend to the ability of handling it learnedly; for, *Magus quo peritior, eo deteſtabilior*, which done, I ſhall enter into a more perſpicuous path for the clearing of my ſelf briefly, without bringing my Self or the Readers into the circles of tedious Diſcourſes. As for Magick, and all other Arts of that pernicious kinde, the invention whereof is aſcribed to *Zoroaſtres* the King of the *Bactrians*, who wrote much thereof, I muſt rather refer it to the invention of the Devil, for no man could have invented ſo much miſchief, who had not the Devil for his Tutour; for theſe works do far exceed humane underſtanding, as appears in the Canon Law, *26 q. 2. cap. Qui ſine Salvatore*, where it is ſaid, *hæc vanitas magicarum artium ex inſtitutione malorum Angelorum in toto orbe terrarum plurimis ſeculis exoluit.* Therefore I am of opinion, that *Zoroaſtres* is ſaid to be the firſt inventour of thoſe Arts, not in a ſtrict ſenſe, becauſe he firſt found them out, but becauſe he firſt received them

them by tradition from the Devil, and committed them to writing, and taught them to other men, so that I am none of those who deny Witches or Witchcraft, but of the number of those who make the Devil the authour of all Witchcraft and Fascinations. And though the several Laws of the Code, under this title, *De Maleficis & Mathematicis*, are conceived onely in the masculine Gender, I conceive they are to be extended unto, and do comprehend the feminine Gender. For it is a rule in that Law, and, as I take it, in Divinity also, that a masculine pronounced in a matter indifferent to man or woman, doth comprehend the feminine, *ff. De verborum significatione.* So that I shall grant, that there are women of that Diabolical Art; for though the said Law of the Code doth express such persons in the masculine Gender, yet I observe, that the *Glossaries*, and most Authours who have written on that Subject, do speak most of all in the feminine Gender, not because the feminine, contrary to the fore-mentioned Law, doth comprehend the masculine, but because these Arts are oftener found in the practice of women then of men, which some argue from the ensuing reasons;

First, Women having less experience and learning then men, are more prone to believe, whereby they are more easily deceived, according to that vulgar saying, *Quæ facile credit, facile decipitur.*

Secondly, Women abound in curiosity, and desire the knowledge of such things as least appertain to them; and it is well known, that curiosity is a great disposition to Superstition and Witchcraft. And, forasmuch as, this, for the most part, is the more simple sex, the Devil often deceives them, *sub specie recti.*

Thirdly, Women are of the softer complexion, which renders them the more easie to take impression from evil spirits; and, even as when, they are instructed and governed by good

ſpirits, they become great examples of virtue and devotion: ſo when they yield to the ſuggeſtions of the Devil, they become the worſt of creatures; for, *Non eſt malitia ſuper nequitiam malæ mulieris.*

Fourthly, The frailty of woman is greater then that of man; wherefore the Devil, even in the beginning, laid ſiege to *Eve*, and drew her to ſin

Fifthly, This ſex entertaining diſlike or hatred againſt any perſons, ſwells higher in exceſs of anger, with ſharper reſolutions of revenge, then ordinarily men do, but being weak in power. And, foraſmuch as, *Vana eſt ſine viribus ira*, the Devil having obtained ſo fair an advantage, offers opportunities of revenge, and promiſeth the help of his aſſiſtance.

Sixthly, Many women are puſilanimous, and when they fall into fits of ſadneſs and diſaſterous diſtractions, they know not well how to free themſelves from that ſtate and condition; and therefore many times remain ſo long therein, untill the Devil may have the advantage of time to tempt and overcome them.

Seventhly, Illiterate women are, for the moſt part, given to too much tatling; and therefore if they have learn't any evil Arts, they are apt to reveal them to their Conſorts, and can eaſily perſwade them ro deſire the like knowledge.

I confeſs, that I have made a modeſt and induſtrious inquiſition into the ſecrets of Nature, but herein I laboured more to humble my ſelf by ſublime ſpeculations, then to ſatisfie a vain and pernicious curioſity; for which reaſon, though I have addreſſed my painful ſtudies to the underſtanding of many ancient and modern Philoſophers, yet I never had the courage to addict my ſelf ſo much as to judicial Aſtrology, though in it ſelf lawful, leaſt it ſhould creare in me a deſire to draw back the impenetrable veil, which hangs between me and forbidden Knowledge; for the Caſuiſts which

I have read, for the right information and due regulation of my Conscience, have sufficiently instructed me of the danger that may ensue therefrom, much less then would I condescend to the beggarly Art of Witchcraft, which is altogether unlawful. By what hath been said it appears, that I confess there are Witches, that the invention of Magick and Witchcraft are truly ascribed to the Devil, that there are women-Witches (I might have added, that some one or more of my Adversaries, either are skill'd in that hellish Art, or at least have made use of those who exercised and professed the like Trade. I could also relate the curious Questions, and report the Answers that have been given by the Professours of that Art, to one or more of that Sisterhood) and that they, for the reasons above rehearsed, do exceed the number of men who exercise that Diabolical Art. But for my self, I utterly deny that I did ever exercise, or know any thing of Witchcraft; nor can any of my Actions (though perhaps far transcending the capacity of those Ladies to comprehend the motives and force of them) with any colourable reason render me in the least suspected thereof; nor have they, neither can they alledge any proof thereof, insomuch, that this calumny is so far from being believed on the evidence of demonstration, that it wants the recommendation of probability. But if the great signes of Witches be to have no measure of their hatred, nor no end of their malice, which commonly sends ignorant women, (and such are most of that Sisterhood) to revenge, which makes them often consult with the Devil, who perswades them upon such occasions to be Witches. Who then are more in reason to be suspected of Witchcraft, they, who with infinite hatred, and the long continued *series* of a most malicious prosecution, arising from no known cause or provocation by me given unto them, nor any concernment of theirs in the late debate of things

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have afflicted me inceſſantly; or I, who in this affliction have uſed no other guard againſt them, then innocency, patience, and my daily prayers to Almighty God, to right me, and pardon them, as knowing, that a ſanctified affliction is better then triumphing impiety, and that innocency is alwayes beſt, though ſometimes unſafe; as alſo that the tears of my undeſerved affliction, will in the end prove ſweeter then the immerited Trophies of their barbarous and unheard of revenge, proſecuted by ſuch means as were never uſed before, by women of quality or prudence, inſomuch, that all they, who have been verſed in thoſe rules, which may ſerve to conduct us through the practical intercourſes of this life, ſtand amazed, as being unable to parallel them out of the Hiſtories of meer *Scythians* and *Barbarians*.

Again, It is ordinary with Negromancers and Witches to raiſe illuſions and phantaſms inſtead of realities: So *Apollonius* made *Achilles* appear in his Tent twelve foot high: *Santabaremus* ſheweth to *Baſilius* the ſoul of his ſon *Conſtantine*. *Iamlicus* made to appear in *Syrta* two figures of little children like *Cupids*, all which had nothing of reality, but were meer *Spectres*. Even ſo theſe Ladies are not onely content to corrupt ſome truths with many perfidious prevarications, but repreſent things altogether falſe under the colour of truth, which is the more diabolicle *Spectre*, by how much the more it tendeth to wrong an innocent Stranger; nay, theſe Ladies, for proof of their skill, endeavour to repreſent that as reaſon, which contradicts common ſenſe, as will appear by that, which is the matter of my next enquiry, into the reaſons wherefore, and the means whereby I ſhould be thought to have exerciſed Witchcraft, to work out ſome deſigns of mine on the above-mentioned Perſon.

It cannot be thought that I ſhould uſe Witchcraft to create an affection in him towards me, or to increaſe it; for it is well known, that almoſt at our firſt interview, even before I could well paſs the formalities of becoming a Witch, we had a high eſteem and affection for one another, and ſettled upon ſuch ſolid grounds of virtue, that they are as unalterable as they are unblameable.

Nor can it be ſuppoſed, that I ſhould endeavour to ſqueeze out of him any part of his goods or eſtate by Witchcraft, or other baſe means, much below me to think of; I ſhould rather, had I that Art, uſe it to thoſe who have greater eſtates, and leſs Charge to maintain. What other ends I could have to bewitch one I honour ſo much, others may gueſs. But I know not.

As for the means uſed to bewitch him, I hear no other alledged, then my giving him a Ring with a *Greek* Poſie in it. Firſt, I anſwer, as in the preſence of God, That I never knew that he had a Ring with a *Greek* Poſie. Secondly, That I never give him any Ring at all.

In the next place, It is as groundleſly reported by ſome of thoſe Ladies, as it was maliciouſly invented by others of them, That I am a common Liar, which were it a true allegation, it might eaſily be proved, becauſe things that are common, are more clearly and frequently obſerved. But I am ſo well known to all thoſe Perſons of Quality who converſe with me (who onely are competent Witneſſes in ſuch a Caſe) that I am not guilty hereof, that I may ſay to the loudeſt Reporter of that untruth. What was given in anſwer by *Libanius* to *Telemachus* upon the like occaſion, *Velim ego apud te*

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mendax esse, dum cæteri te mendacem esse dicere desinant.

But to gratifie them by yielding so much as I can in this particular, I must ingenuously confess, That this their imputation onely wants truth to convince me of being a Liar. Again, So conscienciously have I alwayes conformed my self to the speaking of truth without equivocation, or mental reservation, and shall alwayes so continue to do the like, that, as I had rather these few Leaves were an unwritten Blank then a rude Defence; so also that it were an absolute Confession of Guilt, then a lying Apology.

Thus much may suffice in answer to this Objection, until my Adversaries shall instance in any one untruth that they ever heard proceed from my Lips; and if it shall be thought that I have in this, or any other particular part of my Answer, said too much against those Ladies, I wish I could have said no more, though it be a great satisfaction that one of them, who formerly lifted up her voice like a Trumpet, with loudest exclamation against me, is, by denying what she had said falsly of me, become a double liar.

But no more of exaggeration against them in this or any other particular; for my chiefest aim, Gentle Reader, is my own inoffensive defence; for which reason also, though I want neither information, power, opportunity, nor sharp provocations, I have not, nor shall I in the whole Contexture of this Book, either causlesly object any thing against them, or wrongfully detract from them, as they have done from me, but shall onely call them down as base moneys to their true value, nor will I give them any new stamp of impression, for the Image and Superscription which they now bear in the Worlds esti-

eſtimation, ſufficiently notifie them to be what they are, not onely injurious to me, but alſo as blameable for many other things, not mentioned here, as they are mainly culpable of ſeveral of thoſe things which they have falſly objected againſt me. If theſe Ladies, in the exerciſe of their late aſſumed authority, had regulated their behaviour in this matter, according to the advice and example of a Noble Lady, who did not think fit to countenance their aſſembly with her continual preſence, their paſſions would have moved according to the ſevere allowance of prudedce, gravity, and piety, and the due proportions of provocation given to, or apprehended by them, and they would have vented themſelves by the ſealed meaſures of right reaſon; but not ſubmitting to that regulation, they are become, in the *Spaniſh* Phraſe, *ſeugo de muchachos*, a laughing-ſtock of Children. And their actions, relating to me, have not been warranted in any one particular by any Principle of Piety, Rule of Charity, Moderation, Learning, Prodence, or Maxim of Policy; if they had had a regard to Prudence and Policy, they would not have intermedled in this matter farther then the proportion of concern they had therein; for, *Culpa eſt immiſcere ſe rei ad ſe non pertinenti.* If they had been tempered by moderation, they would not have managed a buſineſs of ſo little concernment, extending no farther then to private perſons, with as much vigour of debate and conteſt, as if the entire intereſt and propriety of the three Nations had been concerned in the debate: if they had been skilled in Argumentation, they would not have

laboured to infer immediate consequences from far fetcht surmises, ungrounded rumours, and peevish suspitions, they would not have represented that for reason, which contradicts common sense; they would not have screwed up every light and temerary suspition to the height of a violent presumption; nor would they have thought, that their own bare reports were to be believed on the credit of their proper Test, without farther enquiry and examination: they would not have concluded, because I was civil to a Person of merit and civility, that therefore I had submitted to unchaste embraces, as if every civil friend must needs be a partner in sin; or that because that Person commended the liberality of Nature and Art, in bestowing on me many gifts and endowments which they wanted, that therefore I was destitute of modesty, and He guilty of a sinful Converse with me. I give but a touch of this matter here, because I have referred it to the more secure and prudent management of my Council, who will prosecute it with effect in the Archbishop's Consistory, who may easily make it appear, that they ought to be chastized with the sharpest Rods of Ecclesiastical Discipline; for, injured reputation, *in re gravi*, requires a reparation as publick, as the injury is notorious. In the mean time it is well known to those who converse with me, that though I be young, and in the verdure of my Age, I am none of those who sport themselves in the green ways of fading Pleasures, but exercise my self painfully, and with no small asperities, in those studies, which may facilitate my progress to the chief of my aims, which

is the Kingdom of Heaven; and I have alwayes preferred the Garland of a Marital Chastity, before all glittering favours which can possibly flow from the glorious circle of the brightest Imperial Diadem on Earth; nay, I had rather enjoy that virtue, then to be crown'd with the Royal State, and Imperial Command of all the Kingdoms upon Earth. Nay farther, I had rather, were it not for the Conjugal state of life, whereunto I am bound by the Ordinance of God, withdraw my self into the recess of a Religious Retirement, then converse with any man whoever he be; nay, I had rather live chastly and innocently in the lowest and darkest dungeon of a melancholy retirement, then I would consent to the least proposal of any immodest desire. Lastly, I had rather die a speedy death, then to continue or prolong life with any disgrace, which may spread it self with a diffusive stain, to the least disparagement of those Illustrious Families from which I have descended, or whereunto I have the Honour to be related; for which reasons, and for my own Vindication, I have directed a leg. l proceeding against them for the clearing of my Reputation, which though most tender, will bear a Tryal before so indifferent and learned a Iudge as is the Archbishop, or his Chancellour. Some things, I know, are so tender in their own nature, as if they be once sullied, they are hardly capable of washing: as for example, *Garden Envies*, which, as *Avicenna* saith, loseth its virtue in washing; and therefore he saith in the words of his Latine Translation, *Interdictum est ablutione ejus lege & medicina.* But though the Reputa-

tion of a Lady be tender in it self, and requires many nice rules and instructions for its Vindication, I shall, with very much confidence, rely on the Iudges and Advocates for the management of my Defence, and the clearing of my Reputation, which will neither shrink, nor lose its virtue in the washing.

But to return from whence I have a little digressed, I must needs say, That if I had been guilty of some of those enormities above-mentioned, it was no argument of their prudence to urge them publickly against me; for if their memories had been so officious to them, as to retain a representation of what they have done themselves, and whereof they are guilty, they would wisely have spared me for at least some of their own sakes; much less doth it become them, whose roofs are covered with brittle Glass, to throw stones at the more solid covering of their Neighbours houses; for such is the prudent Advertisement of a *Spanish* Proverb, *El que biene teiados de vidro no tire piedras, al de su vezino.*

Again, They have not carried themselves after the manner of Christian Charity towards me, nor according to the duty of their own Conscience; for that would have required, that they should first have spoken to me, with a desire to have received satisfaction, before they had published any thing against me, at least, without proof, to my prejudice. Secondly, They have been uncharitable to themselves, in that they have, by their course of proceedings against me, taught others a facil way and method of injuring themselves; for, as *Ordinata Charitas incipit à seipsa*: so doth un-

uncharitablenes many times end in it self: and these Ladies may be assured, that as *Tyrus* had not long rejoyced at the misery of *Jerusalem*, when the same misery came upon her self. So this injury which they have done to me, if it be not punish't in them, it will, as well by example as merit, bring on them the like affliction, which hitherto I have so sadly born, hereof I know they will become sensible hereafter (though their Conscience be now sealed up with slumber and obduration) when the eye of their reason (now dimm'd with foggy mists, rising from their tumultuous and fiery passions, shall behold my cleared innocency cloathed with the brightnes of a greater glory (for true metal will prove the brighter for rubbing) then will they wish that they had been checkt by the reins of a sober and religious restraint, so as to have kept within the bounds of Truth, and that they had followed a less passionate, and more reasonable course against me; for; without peradventure, when they shall be returned to their more settled thoughts, they will be of another mind, and heartily desire that they had never endeavoured, out of undeserved malice, either to muffle up the face of Truth in the obscurity of a black Bag; or to fit things to their malicious desires, and destructive designs, by turning truth into lies, as hitherto they have done, with a too bare-faced confidence, having cast off from their front the comely veil of due modesty; for such hath been their carriage hitherto towards me, that if I should have represented in my actions and deportment the absolute portraicture of *Catiline's* moral vi-

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ques; or should I have lived in as strict a regularity as a *Carthusian*, or could my course of life and conversation have entituled me to a Rubrick in the Kalendar, or justified the painting of me with rayes, yet they would have figured no better thoughts of me, then they ought to have of themselves, they would have censured me as extremely vitious; for deflexion from, and dissimilitude to virtue, are the fiercest censurers of the virtuous, and will draw all their actions into the worst interpretations. It hath been said, I know not how truly, of the *Belgick* Inquisitours, that they did confess, when they met with any of the Ancients, speaking otherwise then the Church, *Quovis Commento*, they used any shift to remedy it; and although these Ladies want ingenuity to confess the figments and prevarications which they have used to make me seem otherwise in my words and actions, then truth can warrant them to report of me; yet, thanks be to God, I am happy in this, that he hath placed me in the Noble City of *Dublin*, inhabited by very many prudent and truly Noble Persons of both sexes, who have observed my deportment, and are not unacquainted with the Maskaries these Ladies have used against me in their late Farie-like Scenes, wherein they would have represented me to the eye of the World, in the false dress of their malicious impositions. It hath been long since said of Stage-players, that they are many times high in applause, but poor in reputation. These Actrices, perhaps in their first Scenes, found some applause amongst themselves, but the World knows they have not mended their own reputations, by en-

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deavouring to destroy mine; and it now appears in great visibility to every understanding person, that though they have wounded their own consciences to stain my reputation, their wounds will not be so soon cured, as my reputation cleared. Wherefore I do so much pity them, as that I desire they may escape the Satyrical Whip of Poets and Lampoons, and that they may be freed from the Strapadoes of an evil Conscience, by using the due remedies prescribed by the Casuists, which are Retractation, Compensation, and a lowly penitent dejection of mind before God, which if they forbear to perform, they will not onely render themselves hereafter hateful to their own imaginations, but also lyable to be cast headlong to the lowest and most painful tormentory of hell, which I pray God to prevent in his mercy, by giving them a sight and true sense of their sins, and thereby to put a seasonable stop to the fury of their malicious proceedings against me; for if their own awakened prudence cannot bring them to these sentiments, yet I am well assured it is possible, that the Omnipotent Lord of Heaven and Earth, who made the Sun, that mighty Creature, the Prince of all the Lights in Heaven, to stop and stand still in the rapid Career of its greatest velocity, can in an instant prohibit their causless prosecution against me, or render it vain, and of no effect; and that the same God, who made the impetuous Current of the raging Sea to recoil, and the mercilesse flame of devouring fire to become a soft refreshing air, can so temper the rage of these tumultuous Ladies, as to make them immediately pull in

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their horns, and blunt their stings, otherwise, at least, when their immortal souls shall be summoned by grim Death to dislodge from their tottering tabernacles of cold clay, and shall begin to enter into the disputed Confines of Eternity, then will they wish that they had been as free from injuring me by their Calumny, as I am innocent of the matters they falsly lay to my charge.

I shall not at this time say much more to these Ladies, I shall therefore dismiss them with a few Observations.

I must confess, that though they have all been culpable, yet I do not think that they have been equally cruel to me, notwithstanding which, I shall say; that every one of them hath been too cruel; for it is observed, that the most tame of Tygers is a cruel beast.

Secondly, I observe, that those Ladies who were interwoven in the Contexture of so strong a Faction against me, are not the onely persons who have injured me; for they who have excited them to detraction are not without sin, nay perhaps more guilty; for *Malletus* the Casuist saith, These do not onely offend, as the Detractour, *effectu detractionis*; but also are unto others *causâ detrahendi*. Nay, the Detractour is but the Authour of his own sin, but these are Authours of their own and others: for which cause, sayeth another Casuist, *Tenetur ad restitutionem, nisi Detractor ipse restituat.*

Thirdly, Whosoever hath delighted himself in hearing detractions, though, as the Casuists say, he doth

both not offend *contra justitiam*, because he is not *efficax causa damni*; yet he offends against charity, for that he takes pleasure *malo Proximi*, which cannot stand with charity.

Fourthly, Superiours in Government, who do not correct Detractors, do not onely sin against charity, but also against justice, *Cum Obligatione restituendi si subditus, non restituat.* so say *Lessius Reginaldus*, and *Molina.*

Fifthly, Parents, Husbands, and Masters, who have silently heard their Children, Wives, or Servants detract from any one, though without delectation, are guilty of a moral incitation to detraction; for, *Qui tacet, consentire videtur:* and *Fernandes* gives two reasons for this Observation, *Tum quia non impedit malum Proximi, tum quia non emendat errantem.*

Sixthly, They who have defamed any one by detraction, are bound to restitution, not onely where the party had a positive good fame, *i. e. bene audiebat*, and therefore did suffer the loss *boni cessantis*; but also where the party had but a negative good name, *i. e. non male audiebat*, and therefore suffers an immergent loss, by positive infamy brought upon him; but especially in the former case, wherein I have been so highly injured.

Seventhly, Restitution is not always made according to the quality of the offence before God, but proportionable to the infamy arising therefrom; and therefore he who divulgeth a true crime to the defamation of his neighbour, shall make equal restitution with him who objected or imposed a false one; wherefore *Fernandes* saith, *Æqualitas restitutionis non oritur ex æqualitate culpæ, sed ex æqualitate damni.*

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Eighthly,

Eighthly, Though *Tolet* be of opinion, That where a good fame is not to be reſtored *in proprio genere* by retractation, it is not to be reſtored by way of another compenſation: and though he enforceth his opinion from this conſideration, That as life, ſo a good fame is not *pretio æſtimabilis*, and therefore cannot be proportioned to any eſtimation: I ſhall hold the oppoſite opinion, maintained by the Angelical and ſubtil Doctors *Thomas Aquinas*, and *Scotus Thom. q. 32. ar. 2. Scot. in 4. d. 15. q. 4.* as alſo by *Soto 4. q. 6. art. 3.* who ſay, That though life as well as a good fame do entitatively and eſſentially exceed any price, yet in reſpect to the eſtimation of men, they may be reduced to a certain value: and I have read, that it is held to be the common opinion of School-Divines, that *quando debitum compenſari nequit, ad æqualitatem in eodem genere compenſandum eſt in alio, quoad fieri poteſt compenſando.*

I am afraid that I have held the Courteous Reader too long in the thorny terms of Caſuiſtical and School-Divinity; yet becauſe it is neceſſary to cure my Adverſaries, not onely by a prick of reprehenſion, but alſo by ſtirring up their Conſciences by ſome pungent incitations to repentance and ſatisfaction, I hope to be excuſed, and the rather, for that I ſhall lead the Readers patience by a more eaſie and ſhort way to a Concluſion, having but one Conſideration more to ſubjoyn, which is this.

If the private diſlike of ſo many Ladies, fomented by envy, after ſo many ſpies ſet on my behaviour, and ſo vigorous an inquiſition had againſt me, and having a voracious will to deſtroy my Credit, cannot find any evidence to convince me of any thing ſcandalous, it is no ſlight Argument of my Innocency. If all their endeavours againſt

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me met together, as the beams of the Sun, on a burning-glaſs cannot kindle a fire to my deſtruction, their moſt frequent attempts proving as the Rayes under the meridian which cannot produce a flame by reflection on a burning-glaſs, for want of ſolid matter to work on. I hope the Reader will free me from all Attachments of buſie ſuſpition for the future, and that no man will own a neceſſity of believing ſuggeſtions upon the reputation of their accuſing me hereafter, for the reputation of ſuch people as are found falſe accuſers, or like an *Iriſh* pair of Tongs, which grow ſhorter in the uſe.

I ſhall conclude with a ſtedfaſt Declaration of a well-grounded hope, which is, that all Perſons of Quality of both ſexes in this City, which is the Metropolis of Loyalty as well as preheminency, will compaſſionate my injured innocency, hitherto groaning under the inſolency of *ſhe*-cruelty and oppreſſion, trampled upon, as it were, to duſt, by the barbarous feet of pride and unwomanly inſultations; but that which begets in me my moſt ſecure confidence, is that of *Iob*, *Behold now, my Witneſs is in heaven, and my record is on high*, whereunto appealeth

Frances Plunkett.

FINIS.

ERRATA.

P. 14. lege *Syria*. p. 19. l. *Endive*. p. 21.

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